

# The Sugar Association, Inc.

1511 K Street, N. W. Washington, D. C. 20005

June 29, 1976

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
HEADS OF MEMBER COMPANIES  
PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

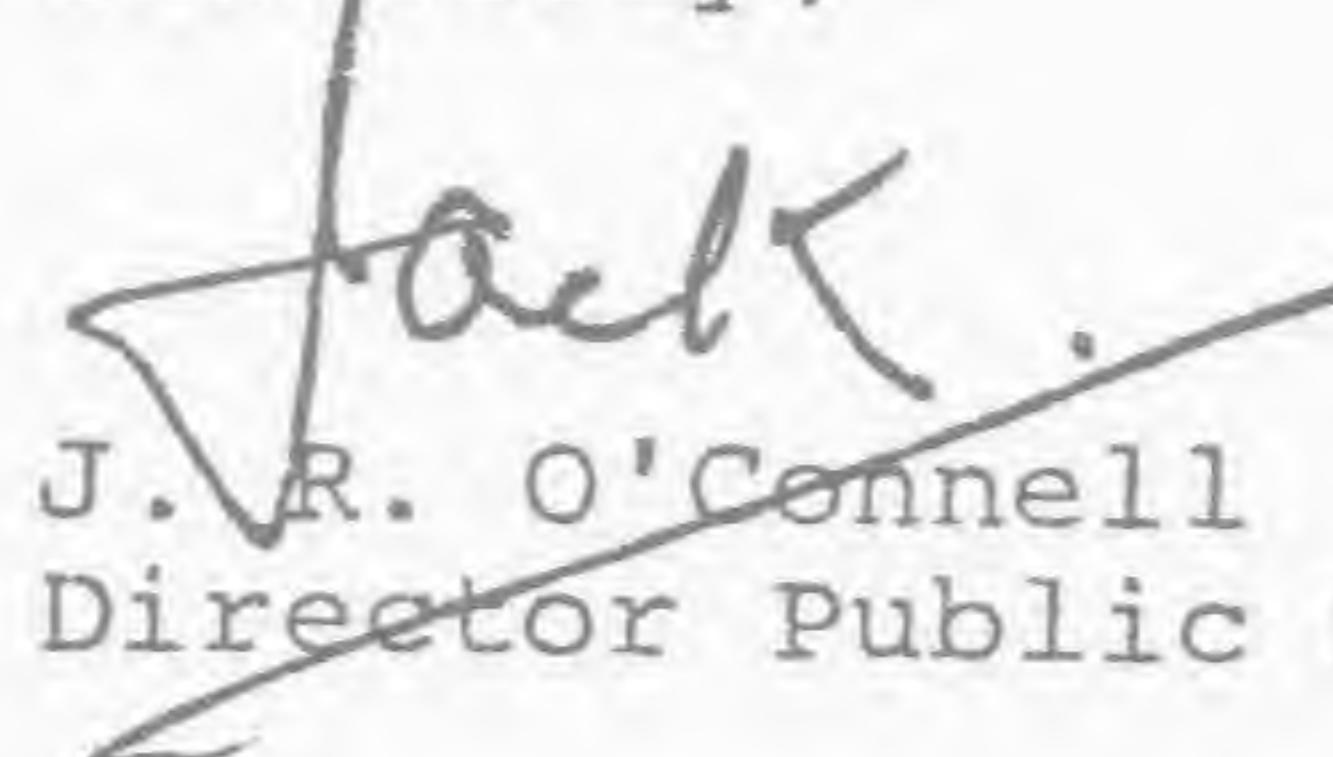
By now most of you may have seen the enclosed article by Dr. Jean Mayer that appeared in the June 20 edition of The New York Times Magazine.

The attached letter has been mailed to the Times. Dr. Stare has also written the enclosed letter to the paper. We are encouraging other doctors familiar with the scientific facts concerning sugar to contact the paper.

In addition, we are preparing a paper to submit to the Times that will address itself to the specific inaccuracies and distortions contained in Dr. Mayer's piece.

Dr. Mayer, together with consumer advocates, has long been a critic of sugar despite the opposing views of his colleague, Dr. Stare. Dr. Stare has been criticized by consumer advocates because of his so-called ties with the food industry, but they have not made headlines out of Dr. Mayer's directorship of the Monsanto Company, a former producer of saccharin. A strange world we live in!

Sincerely,

  
J. R. O'Connell  
Director Public Relations

JRO:kcp

Enclosures

# The Sugar Association, Inc.

1511 K Street, N. W. Washington, D. C. 20005

J. W. Tatem, Jr.  
President

June 25, 1976

Mr. Lewis Bergman  
Editor  
New York Times Magazine  
229 West 43rd. Street  
New York, New York 10036

Dear Mr. Bergman:

I was dismayed to read Dr. Jean Mayer's piece on sugar (June 20, 1976). In that he has presented his opinions without regard to the scientific facts concerning sugar and health, the article approximates the anti-sugar tirades regularly foisted on the unknowing public by pseudoscientists promoting questionable and costly fad foods and diets.

Dr. Mayer has long been an opponent of sugar, but his recent writings give clear indication that he has failed to take into account the continuing scientific findings and writings concerning carbohydrates with respect to health.

As well, his handling of "consumption" figures can only be interpreted as misinterpretation of the facts. For the record, there are no accurate sucrose consumption figures. U.S. Department of Agriculture per-capita consumption estimates, cited by Dr. Mayer, are disappearance figures based on deliveries and have been roughly 100 lbs per capita for 50 years. During this period consumption has been estimated at 80 lbs., or roughly 15 per cent of total caloric intake--a figure regarded as moderate in scientific circles.

Many of Dr. Mayer's expressed opinions on sugar are not scientifically substantiated, a point the Times might well have made in a boxed disclaimer. We can say this with authority because they have been checked out by leading institutions and medical experts and found wanting.

Sugar, as a food, is one of many factors contributing to dental caries; but to state that it is causally related to diabetes and to imply that it is related to other death-dealing diseases, is to fly in the face of the facts and to mislead the consuming public.

*The Sugar Association, Inc.*

Mr. Lewis Bergman  
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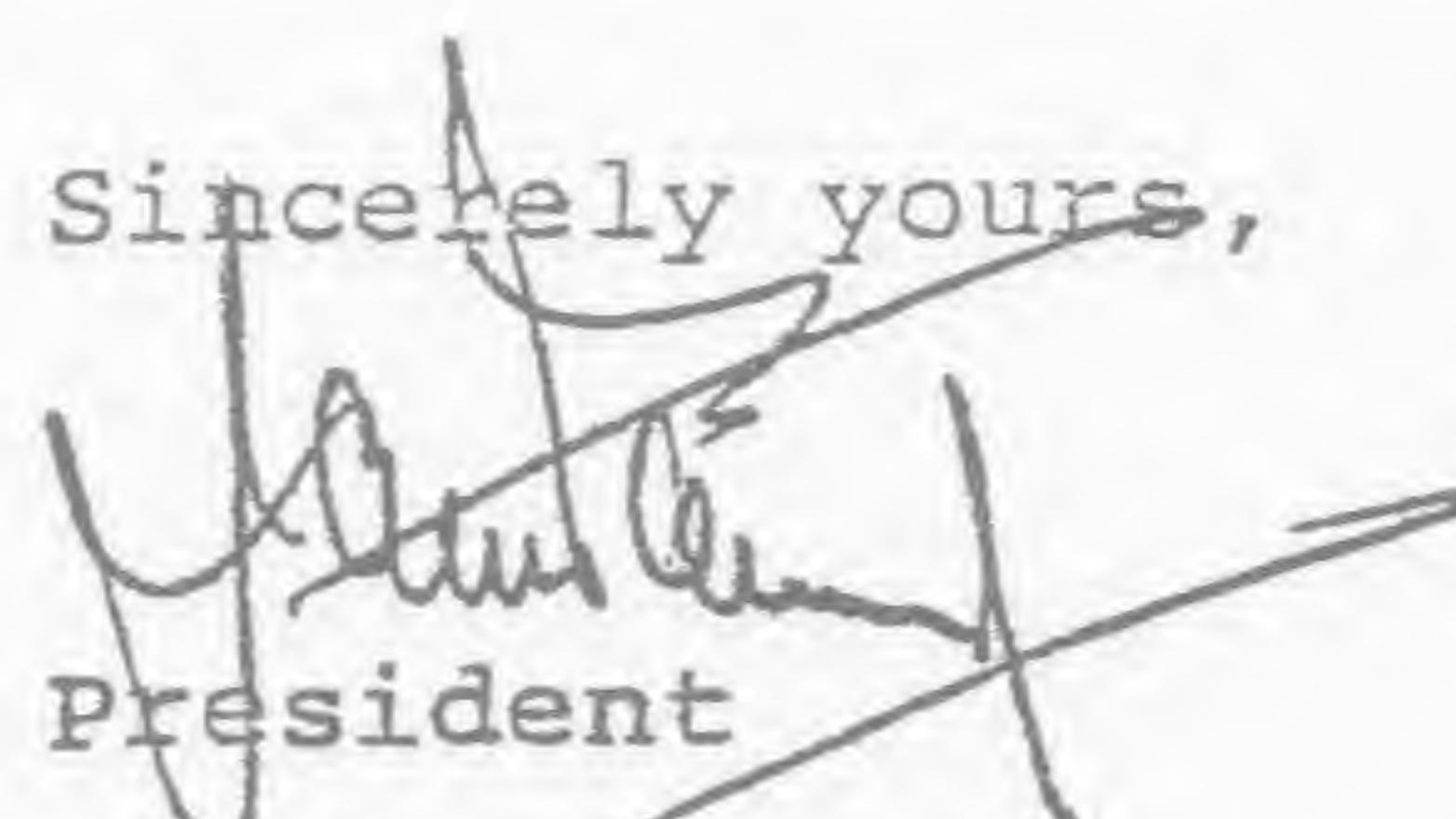
We don't suggest that Dr. Mayer means to mislead the public with this article, but we're at a loss to understand its purpose. It brings to mind the comment of another sugar critic whose opinions were being challenged in a scientific forum. Thus cornered, he boldly proclaimed that his job was to keep the heat off saturated fats.

When the GRAS (Generally Recognized as Safe) Review Committee recently called for public commentary on its tentative report to the Food and Drug Administration concluding that sugar at present consumption levels is safe, Dr. Mayer did not appear.

Beyond opinion, the piece contains innumerable inaccuracies to which we will address ourselves under separate cover. As well, it is chock full of literary deception and distortion, such as "most practicing nutritionists...consider sugar a menace to good nutrition" (not true) and "after reviewing the evidence, (no evidence indicated) I believe it is adequate to show that the habitual consumption of large amounts of sugar is highly undesirable from the viewpoint of health..." (sophistry: large amounts of any food or drug are undesirable.)

As a "cute" story masquerading as scientific fact it does no credit to the Times or Dr. Mayer.

Sincerely yours,

  
President

JWT:kcp

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665 HUNTINGTON AVENUE  
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New York Times Magazine  
229 W. 43rd Street  
New York, NY 10036

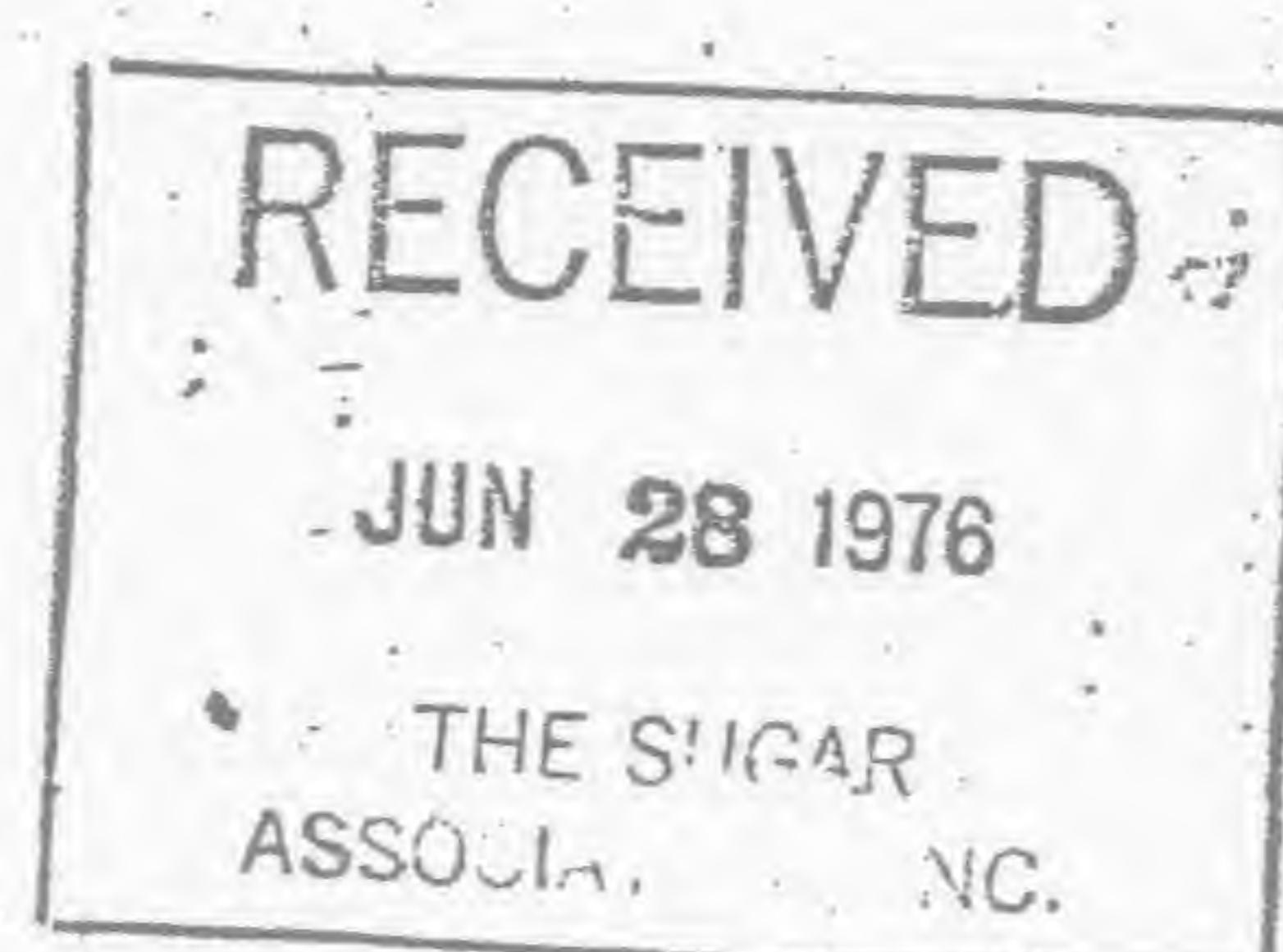
Dear Sir:

Enclosed is a "Letter to the Editor" I submit for your consideration. It is a response to the piece you published June 20 written by my colleague, Jean Mayer. Of minor importance, you identify Mayer as having been professor of nutrition "since 1950". Actually, he was appointed professor in 1964. There are four professor of nutrition at Harvard, more (as far as I know) than at any other university in this or any other country.

Sincerely,

Fredrick J. Stare, M.D.,  
Professor of Nutrition  
Chairman, Dept. of Nutrition

FJS:cm



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June 25, 1976

Letter to the Editor:

My colleague, Jean Mayer, and I have over the years disagreed on a few points of nutrition--MSG, DES, food dyes, presweetened cereals, and a number of the nutritional activities of the Center For Science in the Public Interest of which he was (is?) an advisor. His piece, "The Bitter Truth About Sugar", in your magazine section of June 20 has a number of points I wish to take issue with.

1. Dr. Mayer wrote: "Today ... it (sugar) is a major component of the American diet ... habitual consumption of large amounts of sugar ... consumption of ... sugar (sucrose) .. has been hovering around 110 pounds per year ...."

From 1960-1974, the official figures from the Department of Agriculture for sugar disappearance have varied from 97 to 103 pounds/person/year, but these figures are for sugar disappearance from the market place, not consumption as Mayer well knows. Preliminary and unofficial figures for 1975 are less than 90 pounds, a long way from "hovering around 110 pounds". Actual consumption is estimated to be 25 to 30 percent less than "disappearance" due largely to waste. If one assumes a consumption of 75 pounds per year that is equivalent to about 0.2 pounds per day (90 grams) and at four Calories per gram, that is about 360 Calories per day provided by sucrose. At an average total intake of 2,500 Calories per day (low by many estimates) that means sugar is providing only 15 percent of total calories, hardly what most people would consider a "major component ... large amounts." If one assumes a more realistic figure of 3,000 Calories per day, sugar provides only 12 percent of total calories.

2. Mayer referred to the sugar content of breakfast cereals and mentions one containing 58 percent sugar and another 70 percent, yet he fails to mention three recent independent studies coming from dental schools at Harvard, Michigan, and Alabama, all done with relatively large numbers of children over substantial periods of time showing that dental decay was not influenced by consumption of breakfast cereals with or without sugar, whether sugar was added by the manufacturer or at the table, or even whether cereal was included or omitted from the diet. Neither did he mention the well known anticariogenic effect of milk and 95 percent of breakfast cereals are consumed with milk.

3. Mayer dwelt a great deal on the degenerative and metabolic diseases--atherosclerotic diseases of the heart, and blood vessels, cancer, diabetes, etc. He wrote: "Diet and mode of life are involved in these new pandemics". With this statement I completely agree but with his frequent implication and innuendo that "the sugar content of our diet" is the chief culprit, I emphatically disagree.

More

June 25, 1976

4. Mayer wrote: "Purveyors of health foods and 'natural foods' enthusiasts are unanimous in their statements that white sugar is toxic ...". But why didn't he follow with a statement that they are unanimously wrong as he knows they are in most of the nutritional nonsense they and their camp followers peddle, and usually for a highly inflated fee!

5. Mayer wrote: "there is a strong suspicion that a large sugar intake may be causally related to diabetes ...". He and perhaps a few others may have some "strong suspicions" about this and the many other suspicions in the "bitter truth about sugar" but the facts do not support the suspicions. The suspicions and innuendoes are very effective in unnecessarily frightening the public about the safety of our food supply, but they sound more like a consumer activist than a rational scientist.

There are hazards in foods but they don't come from sugar or additives, they come from eating (and drinking) too much and lack of elementary principles of sanitation.

Fredrick J. Stare, M.D.  
Professor of Nutrition  
Chairman, Department of Nutrition  
Harvard School of Public Health

Dr. Stare is author of several books, the latest being PANIC IN THE PANTRY. The gist of PANIC, there is no reason for panic unless you enjoy being panicked by the ego-massaging Consumer Activists

bcc: Mr. J.W. Tatem, Jr. ✓